

Sadly, these moms are right. The shortage is dire. That is why I am grateful that the President has sprung into action trying to help these parents and families. Two days ago, the administration completed its first shipment of more than 75,000 pounds of imported formula as part of Operation Fly Formula, enough for more than half a million bottles. The second shipment is expected in a few days.

As these shipments reach American shores, President Biden has also invoked the Defense Production Act, an authority he has under the law to ramp up domestic production. This could help to eliminate supply chain bottlenecks and compel manufacturers to prioritize the production of infant formula. It is hard to think of anything that would be a higher priority.

Both of these steps are crucial, but in the meantime, if you are a parent struggling to find formula, the Department of Health and Human Services has a website you should visit, [HHS.gov/formula](https://www.hhs.gov/formula). That is [HHS.gov/formula](https://www.hhs.gov/formula). It identifies companies and healthcare providers, food banks, and other resources that have supplies available. Let me say it again: [HHS.gov/formula](https://www.hhs.gov/formula).

Additionally, last week, President Biden signed the Access to Baby Formula Act into law. It allows parents to purchase more infant formula through WIC, which provides nutritional support for low-income families, and I believe I read that half the babies in America count on WIC.

Finally, the Food and Drug Administration is working to maximize formula production as well—in particular, the production of specialized formulas, like hypoallergenic formula, for infants with specific health needs.

The FDA also has entered into an agreement with Abbott to get its Michigan factory back in business. That is the largest infant formula factory in the country. We need to get it reopened safely and quickly. As long as the company meets critical safety standards, we want them in production.

But let's be clear: This disastrous situation could have been averted if the FDA was not chronically understaffed and underfunded. At the time Abbott's factory was shut down, try to guess how many Federal employees had the responsibility for the oversight of this life-and-death industry. The answer: nine. Nine people within FDA were responsible for the oversight of infant formula, nine workers monitoring a \$3.5 billion industry that directly impacts millions of American families.

These workers are spread way too thin, and here is why that is a problem: When a safety issue arises, it can take months for the FDA to launch an investigation. That is exactly what happened at Abbott's plant in Michigan. The FDA received a complaint about that factory's production last October, but they didn't physically inspect the plant until January of this year.

FDA does essential work with limited resources, but it cannot serve the needs of the American consumers and families on a thin budget. If we want to truly protect the safety and well-being of families and kids, we need to step up in Congress. The House of Representatives did it last week. House lawmakers passed Congresswoman ROSA DELAURO's legislation to provide \$28 million in additional funding to help the FDA resolve the formula shortage and to prevent the next one.

This legislation is a no-brainer from my point of view, and that is why it is puzzling that 190 Republican Congressmen and women voted against it. They voted against giving money to the FDA to get the infant formula back safely into the homes of American families and to prevent any healthcare and safety issue in the future, and 190 Republicans said: No, I don't want to spend that money. That is right, the party that often claims to be so pro-family voted against legislation to help parents feed their families, feed their babies, and provide parents with the peace of mind that their formula is safe.

Now, I am sure my Republican colleagues will keep coming to the floor this week to express outrage over the infant formula shortage, but as you listen to what they say, also watch how they vote. If they are serious about protecting kids and families, it is time to vote that way. Congresswoman DELAURO's legislation puts us on the right path. I hope the Senate joins the House in passing it soon.

While we are at it, let's also recognize the challenges that were facing working families long before the formula shortage and even before the pandemic.

Congress has waited far too long to provide the support working families need to thrive. So let's extend the enhanced child tax credit. Let's provide paid parental leave. Let's offer postpartum health coverage to all new moms. Let's help parents afford the cost of high-quality education. I think those measures are critical, and they are pro-family.

We have the power to make America the best place in the world to raise a family. We are not quite there. Instead of denying families the freedom to choose when and how to raise a child, I have a different proposal for my colleagues on both sides of the aisle: Let's invest in the health and potential of every family in America.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Republican leader is recognized.

BIDEN ADMINISTRATION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, on the campaign trail, Candidate Biden made some big promises for America's economic recovery. His campaign published "the Biden Plan to revitalize Main Street and invest in small businesses" and another "to give America's working families the tools, choices, and freedom they need to build back better." So just how have the working families and small businesses fared with President Biden and the Democratic Party calling the shots? Sixty-nine percent of Americans say our economy right now is bad. Even more—77 percent—say they are pessimistic about costs rising even more in the coming months. Just last month, one longstanding measure of optimism among small business owners reached its lowest level on record.

Month after month, the historic high inflation Democrats helped unleash with runaway spending last spring is taking its toll on Americans' hope for the future, but more immediately, it is taking its toll on their wallets. More than a third of Americans say they are having difficulty paying for usual household expenses.

Just last month, the price of a gallon of milk was 16 percent higher than the year before. Gas prices are scraping the stratosphere. In Kentucky, the average price for a gallon of regular reached an alltime high 2 weeks ago. Today, it is 20 cents higher than that.

In Lexington, one resident who drives a rideshare put it this way:

I'm not trying to be a billionaire, I'm just trying to pay some bills.

She is facing more pain at the pump, and so are the folks paying even more to fill up trucks, tractors, or delivery vans with diesel.

The costs behind small business owners' headaches are behind consumers' hardship.

But somehow, as our Nation reaps the effects of their first year of one-party control, Washington Democrats are operating as if the exact opposite conditions were afoot. After their spending bonanza helped kick off historic inflation, they want to pile on the biggest tax hikes in history. After their radical day 1 climate agenda hammered the most affordable forms of American energy, they want to double down on far-left fantasies.

As the Biden administration passed its 100th day in office, I urged the President to "recommit to solving our nation's actual problems." Well, here we are, approaching his administration's 500th day in office. By now, America's working families have figured out for themselves that the so-called "Biden Plan" for them is just a fast track to historic hardships.

ELECTION LAWS

Mr. President, now on an entirely different matter, 5 months ago, Democrats in the media were saying the sky was falling because of some States' mainstream voting laws. Georgia passed a voting law that was more open

than the rules on the books in blue States like New York and Delaware. Texas passed a law that switched off some one-time COVID exceptions, like keeping polls open in the middle of the night.

These mainstream laws brought a torrent—a torrent—of hysteria from the far left, from corporate America, Hollywood, and the corporate media rushed to condemn laws they hadn't even read. It was almost completely untethered from reality. One poll a few months back found that less than half of 1 percent of Americans said voting laws were the country's most important problem. More Americans actually believe current voting laws are too lax than believe they are too restrictive. But the far left bubble became fixated—fixated—on this nonissue.

The manufactured outrage just kept coming. At the peak of the crescendo a few months back, 48 of 50 Senate Democrats voted to break this institution—to break this institution—to ram through a 3-year-old voting takeover bill on a partisan basis. That is how close we came.

Now, fortunately, a bipartisan majority saved the Senate as an institution, and now, we are seeing the hard evidence that, as we all knew, the hysteria was never based on fact to begin with.

Georgia's primary election day is today. But we already know a lot, thanks to early voting figures.

And here was a Washington Post headline a few days ago, "Voting is surging in Georgia despite controversial new election law."

The story goes on:

[R]ecord-breaking turnout is undercutting predictions that the Georgia Election Integrity Act . . . would lead to a falloff in voting. By the end of Friday, the final day of early in-person voting, nearly 800,000 Georgians had cast ballots—more than three times—three times the number in 2018, and—

Listen to this—

higher even than in 2020, a presidential year.

Turnout is up despite the fact that fewer Georgians are availing themselves of the State's no-excuse mail-in voting. Georgians are getting back to in-person voting, a return to prepandemic norms, and doing so in huge, huge numbers.

The reporter quoted one 70-year-old Black voter who was stunned by the easiness of the voting process after all the disinformation that had been thrown around.

Here is what she said:

I had heard that they were going to try to deter us in any way possible . . . [so] [t]o go in there and vote as easily as I did . . . I was really thrown back.

Shame—shame—on the Democrats who pushed the Big Lie that a grand scheme was afoot to prevent millions of Americans from voting. It was never true. It was just to push their pre-existing policy agenda. The fake hysteria was just a pretext to push a sweeping national takeover of election laws that Democrats had already had on the shelf for a number of years.

Now the rhetoric is proving false right before our eyes. These common-sense Republican laws appear to be achieving just what the American people want. The American people want to make it easier to vote and harder to cheat.

This whole episode proves exactly why our democracy still needs its cooling saucer. This is exactly the reason why the U.S. Senate exists, so that one party cannot lose its head to a short-term fever and upend massive Federal laws on a partisan basis under false pretexts.

Thank goodness—thank goodness—a bipartisan majority stopped Democrats from destroying the Senate over this fake issue a few months back.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The majority leader is recognized.

THE REPUBLICAN PARTY

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, it has become clear over the last few months that too much of the Republican Party has been taken over by MAGA Republicans, who are now dominating the party and Republicans in the Senate, moving the party away from things it has often stood for in the past.

The contrast has become clear: Democrats, for instance, want to codify a woman's freedom to make decisions about her own body into Federal law, but MAGA Republicans want to take away women's rights by pushing national abortion bans, jailing women and doctors for carrying out abortions, and even pushing bans with no exception for rape or incest.

In the wake of the Buffalo shooting, MAGA Republicans continue embracing unhinged conspiracy theories like the "great replacement," which has been a rallying cry for ultranationalists and White supremacists in Europe for years.

And all year long, while Democrats have been pushing solutions that will lower costs, MAGA Republicans and the chair of the Republican campaign arm openly support raising taxes on the poor and working families, while cheering on inflation as a "gold mine." And those were Senator SCOTT's words, not mine. He called inflation a gold mine. Imagine.

MAGA Republicans are showing Americans exactly who they are. In an amazing happening this weekend, the Conservative Political Action Conference, the largest conservative organization in America, held their conference in Hungary and welcomed one of Europe's most notorious proponents of "replacement theory," Viktor Orban, as their keynote speaker.

Again, the Conservative Political Action Conference, a very important organization in the new Republican MAGA party, had Viktor Orban as their keynote speaker, an autocrat, who has whittled away democracy in Hungary.

It is sickening—sickening—to see that 2 weeks after the shooting in Buffalo, Republicans as prominent as Donald Trump and Tucker Carlson, spoke at the same event as one of Europe's most prominent White nationalists and authoritarians. It is a scary and otherworldly turn for one of America's two parties to take.

I know not all Republicans embrace the views of MAGA Republicans. I know many of them support women's rights and embrace diversity and reject conspiracies like "White replacement."

I urge these Republicans in the Senate and the country to repudiate the MAGA wing taking over the GOP. I invite the voters to support Democratic candidates as a protest against extremism so we as a nation can halt the dangerous rise of the hard right.

This week, all of us in the Senate will have a chance to take a stand against extremism by voting to begin debate on the Domestic Terrorism Prevention Act.

For the information of all, I will take the first procedural step on this legislation later today, and Members can expect to vote on Thursday on this bill that will crack down on domestic terrorism and extremism.

As far as legislation goes, this bill is as much of a no-brainer as it comes. Two years ago, when Donald Trump was President, the House passed this bill unanimously. Every single Republican was for the bill. But in a sign of how radicalized the GOP has become, nearly every single House Republican opposed it last week, despite one Morning Consult poll that showed that a majority of Republicans and Republican voters support these common-sense measures.

Let me say it again. According to one Morning Consult poll, a majority of Republican voters support cracking down on domestic terrorism. Yet, nevertheless, every single House Republican voted against this bill last week.

If you wanted some proof that the MAGA wing of the Republican Party is taking over the whole party, there it is.

I hope that, given everything happening across the country right now, Senate Republicans will act differently and support this bill.

Let me be clear, Democrats' goal is to pass this bill, just as it is with all bills we bring to the Senate floor. But if Republicans keep going down their extremist, obstructionist path, then this vote will still allow the American people to hold their elected representatives accountable.

Not long ago, views like "replacement theory" were relegated to the fringes of American society, shared primarily by twisted minds on online message boards. But today, White supremacy, which has been with us for decades